

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: March 9, 2021 8:00 AM

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COMMENTS FOR: HB 484

Fred Dickey, CEO

AAPS

Laredo, TX

am writing in support of HB 484. This bill would increase access to high-quality primary care for underserved and vulnerable patients in Texas. It would also benefit taxpayers by lowering costs. Patients in Direct Primary Care practices have fewer hospital admissions, compared to patients in traditional practices, because of prompt, consistent, personalized care for chronic conditions. They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24-hour access to a physician who knows them. Physicians also benefit because overhead wasted complying with red tape is decreased. In short this bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. So please consider a favorable approval for HB 484.

Thank you for speaking out! Your voice makes a difference.

~AAPS Texas Chapter

Clayton Young, Dr

Self

The Woodlands, TX

Support

John Fraser, Dr.

Self-Physician

Wimberley, TX

I have been a Texas-licensed physician since 1979, as a pediatrician. As such, the majority of the children I have cared for over the years in the office, urgent care clinic, or the emergency room were enrolled in the Medicaid program, in the Rio Grande Valley, Coastal Bend, and Houston metro areas. I am writing in support of HB 484. In my opinion this bill would increase access to high-quality primary care for underserved and vulnerable patients in Texas. It would also benefit taxpayers by lowering costs. Patients in Direct Primary Care practices have fewer hospital admissions, compared to patients in traditional practices, because of prompt, consistent, personalized care for chronic conditions. They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24-hour access to a physician who knows them. Physicians also benefit because overhead wasted complying with red tape is decreased. In short this bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. So please consider a favorable approval for HB 484. I thank you in advance for your consideration of my comment.

Peter McCullough

HeartPlace

Dallas, TX

I am in support of this bill. Medicaid recipients need more access to physicians in their local areas and are not well served by their managed organizations. Support open system and Medicaid patients to be seen at resident teaching clinics and other providers that accept Medicaid. The Medicaid managed care plans restrict access and we currently cannot see them in resident teaching clinics where they could receive great care and be of great benefit to GME programs.

Arthur Cameron

self, Retired

Tyler, TX

I am writing in support of HB 484. This bill would increase access to high-quality primary care for under-served and vulnerable patients in Texas. It would also benefit taxpayers by lowering costs. Patients in Direct Primary Care practices have fewer hospital admissions, compared to patients in traditional practices, because of prompt, consistent, personalized care for chronic conditions. They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24-hour access to a physician who knows them. Physicians also benefit because overhead wasted complying with red tape is decreased. In short this bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. So please approve HB 484.

Charlotte Stuard

Self

Iraan, TX

I am writing in support of HB484. This bill would increase access to high-quality primary care for underserved and vulnerable patients in Texas. It would also benefit taxpayers by lowering costs. Patients in direct primary care practices have fewer hospital admissions compared to patients in traditional practices because a prompt, consistent, and personalize care for chronic conditions. They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24 hour access to physicians who know them. Physicians also benefit because overhead complying with red tape is decreased. This bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. Please consider a favorable approval for HB484.

Jose Lopez

self

Houston, TX

I am writing in support of HB 484. This bill would increase access to high-quality primary care for underserved and vulnerable patients in Texas. It would also benefit taxpayers by lowering costs. Patients in Direct Primary Care practices have fewer hospital admissions, compared to patients in traditional practices, because of prompt, consistent, personalized care for chronic conditions. They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24-hour access to a physician who knows them. Physicians also benefit because overhead wasted complying with red tape is decreased. In short this bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. So please consider a favorable approval for HB 484.

Jim Wade

Self - consultant

Gordonville, TX

I am writing in support of HB 484. This bill would allow patients in Texas more freedom to seek health care from providers they prefer while lowering costs to taxpayers (the masters you serve). Patients in Direct Primary Care practices have fewer hospital admissions, compared to patients in traditional practices, because of prompt, consistent, personalized care for chronic conditions.

They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24-hour access to a physician who knows them. Physicians also benefit because overhead wasted complying with red tape is decreased. In short this bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. Heed the voice of those you serve.

Maria Hawkins

Self Customer Solutions Manager

Richmond, TX

I am writing in support of HB 484. This bill would increase access to high-quality primary care for underserved and vulnerable patients in Texas. It would also benefit taxpayers by lowering costs. Patients in Direct Primary Care practices have fewer hospital admissions, compared to patients in traditional practices, because of prompt, consistent, personalized care for chronic conditions. They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24-hour access to a physician who knows them. Physicians also benefit because overhead wasted complying with red tape is decreased. In short this bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. So please consider a favorable approval for HB 484.

Katarina Lindley, Dr/President/VP

DPCAction, Texas American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians, Texas Osteopathic Medical Association, self direct primary care physician Owner Eagle Medical Center DPC

Weatherford, TX

I am DPC physician in Brock Texas, Parker County and have had my DPC practice for 4 years now. I am also President TxACOF, Vice President TOMA and Board Member of DPC Action. I am writing in support of HB 484. This bill will increase access to primary care for underserved and vulnerable patients in Texas. It would also benefit taxpayers by lowering costs because of Medicaid overutilization of emergency rooms and urgent cares. Patients in Direct Primary Care practice, like mine, have fewer hospital admissions, compared to patients in traditional practices, because of increased access in practice like mine. My patients have my cell phone and lots of time I save them time and money so they don't have to go to ER for things that we can take care of in the office easily. . They have fewer expensive emergency department visits because of 24-hour access to a physician who knows them. Physicians also benefit because overhead wasted complying with red tape is decreased. In short this bill would benefit all parties, but most importantly the patients. So please consider a favorable approval for HB 484.

Harold Felter, Dr

Self

Corpus Christi, TX

I supportHB 484

Heather Reagin, Dr.

Self

Fort Worth, TX

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Mary Lowry

self

Bedford, TX

please support HB 484 by Shaheen

my grandchildren are covered by medicaid

it sounds like this bill will be very beneficial to all parties involved

Direct Primary Care (DPC) would be a great thing for children like my grandchildren, who have several ongoing medical issues

Kris Held, MD

self, physicians

San Antonio, TX

Tremendous gratitude and appreciation for Representative Shaheen for his work on HB 484. This is a breakthrough pilot program that will benefit patients who have no other option than Medicaid. I support this bill. As past president of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons and a member of the Texas chapter of AAPS, I can attest to the support of these organizations and as well. Our motto is All for the Patient. This bill would benefit the patients of Texas over special interests and middlemen including those outside the state and nation.

Simone Nichols-Segers

National MS Society

Austin, TX

Thank you for the opportunity to share the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's concerns with HB 484. While we appreciate Rep. Shaheen's desire to increase access to healthcare for uninsured Texans through Medicaid, we have significant concerns about a potential direct primary care pilot program. The Society supports ensuring that all individuals who need Medicaid receive meaningful coverage as well as access to a variety of high-quality medical services and prescription medications. Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. Nearly one million people are living with MS in the United States. Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50. No single test can diagnose MS. An individual would need a neurologic exam, an MRI, spinal fluid analysis, and more to receive a diagnosis. Unfortunately, a direct care program would not offer a comprehensive set of benefits or guaranteed access to those services. If an individual began experiencing MS-like symptoms under this direct primary care model, the path to diagnosis would be unaffordable or result in large medical bills. Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with a disease-modifying therapy (DMT) is the best way to modify the course of the disease, slow the accumulation of disability and protect the brain from damage due to MS. Many MS DMTs are now available, including some generics, but the brand median price in 2020 was \$91,835, with even generic medications often costing thousands of dollars. Without prescription drug coverage through Medicaid, medications to treat MS would be financially out of reach for newly-diagnosed individuals in a direct primary care Medicaid program. Increasing the number of insured individuals will reduce the uncompensated care costs for healthcare providers and hospitals and the costly burden of that care on the local economy. Recent federal legislation incentivizes full Medicaid expansion – providing a two-year 5 percentage point Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) increase to states' base FMAP rates, in addition to the temporary 6.2 percentage-point FMAP increase available during the Public Health Emergency, which the Biden Administration has stated will last through the end of 2021. Newly expanding states would receive the current 90 percent FMAP provided for the expansion group. In a year when Texas has been devastated by both the COVID-19 pandemic and destructive winter storms, these incentives make comprehensive Medicaid expansion an even better financial choice. All Texans should have access to quality, affordable and comprehensive health care. Please support full Medicaid expansion instead of HB 484, which has the potential to leave uninsured participants with unmet medical needs and large, uncovered medical bills.

Aleem Kanji, Dr.

Self

Houston, TX

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Anne Dunkelberg

Every Texan

Austin, TX

Every Texan does not wish to formally oppose the bill. Instead, we submitted comments to the author and all committee members detailing the provisions of the bill and pilot concept which we would hope to see in a bill we could support, and also detailing the changes that would be necessary to obtain approval from federal Medicaid officials. This model is generally untested in Medicaid, and because it is designed for people with higher incomes, would require significant changes from the usual DPC model. Even with those changes, it would appear that 1115 waiver authority would be needed to pursue federal approval of a pilot. Our full comments may be found at everytexan.org.